the RARS Exciter

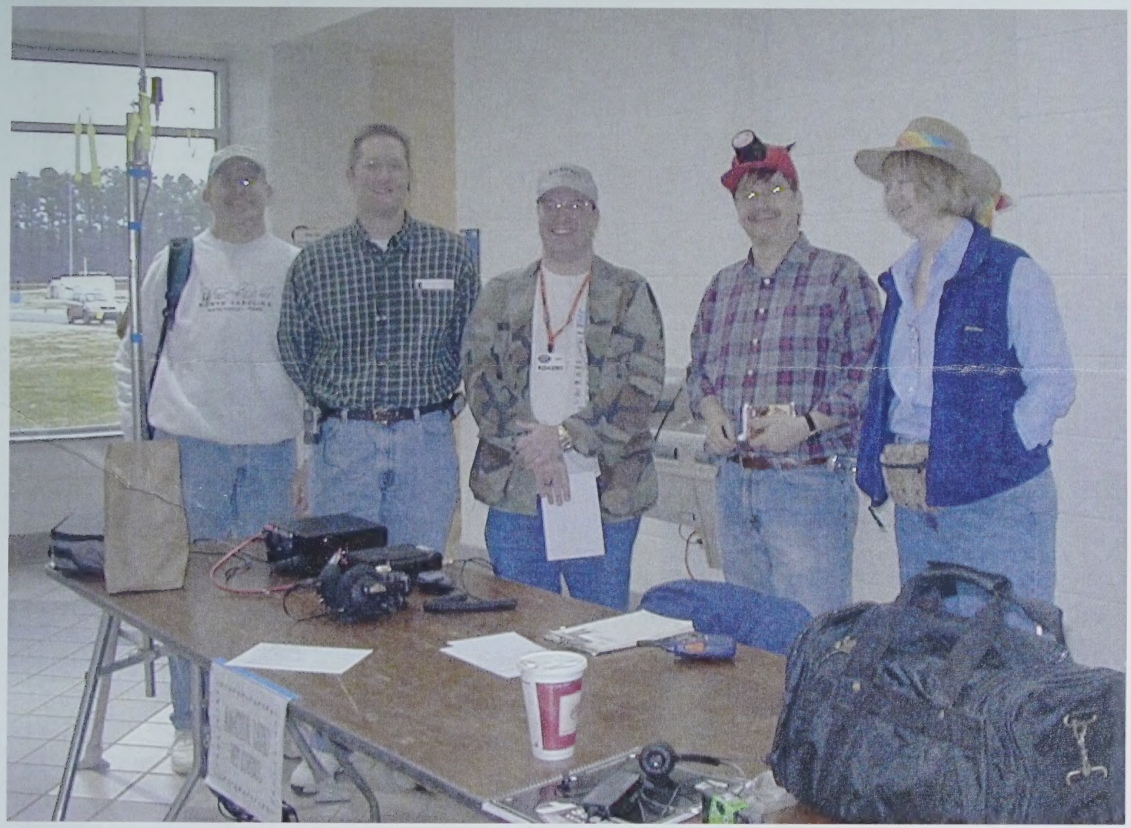
Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

RARS

Worldwide Friendship

April 2005, Number 408

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND



The Eastern Region Odyssey of the Mind Tournament was held on March 5 this year at East Wake High School in Wendell. Fourteen hams provided communications support for the event.
Thanks go out to: Marian K1MRB, Karl K4LNX, Brian KA9QJT, Mike KC4WUH, Rhett KE4HIH, Al KE4IHX, Joanna KE4QOZ, Larry KG4FIQ, John KG4SWI, Gil KG4YJG, Janell KI4BZG, Courtney KI4HOS, Virginia NC4VA and Dick KD4ISC.

Pictured from L-R: Gil KG4YJG, Brian KA9QJT, John KG4SWI, Dick KD4ISC and Connie (Dick's XYL and FRS Diva for the day).

The Exciter

The ***Exciter*** is the monthly newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It is available in both printed and electronic form. The printed version is mailed to members just before each club meeting. The electronic form, in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, is e-mailed about a week earlier.

We solicit both articles and advertising. The deadline for submissions is first Friday of the month or Friday after the monthly meeting. Contact the Editor.

The views contained in the Exciter are those of the individual authors, and are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society.

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, we incorporated a new RARS, and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friend-ship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique; and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are $18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay $5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are $12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are $9.00 per year.

Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer, or the RARS web site (www.rars.org).

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919-469-5322
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919-859-0029
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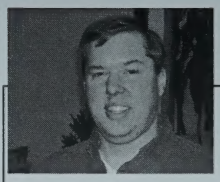
RARS Repeaters in Raleigh:
145.13 (82.5 PL)
146.64
224.64 (Temporarily off the air)
444.525 (82.5 PL)

WEB SITE www.rars.org



PRESIDENT COMMENTS

I'm happy to announce something new at RARS -- the HF Challenge. We'll kick off the Challenge at the March meeting, and get the details broadcast out shortly.

What is it?

Basically, it's a yearlong running "Challenge" to have QSOs with as many States, Provinces, NC Counties, and DXCC countries as possible. Every QSO counts for one point, regardless of (HF) band or mode. We'll keep running totals, and have a chance to hear tales of fellow club members "bagging a rare one."

It's easy to enter -- we'll make the tally sheets available on the web soon. Just fill one out and bring it to a meeting, or we'll set up a way to do this via email as well.

We're planning a few different categories, so everyone regardless of station size (Big Guns to Little Pistols) and operating style (pile-up DX vs ragchewing) can enjoy this friendly competition.

Watch the web and listen to the nets -- details will be forthcoming!

The Exciter goes to the printer the first Monday after the general meeting. Electronic mailing is the same week. Printing and mailing may vary.

RALEIGH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MEETINGS

Date: ***Every first Tuesday of the Month***
Location: ***Forest Hills Baptist Church, at Dixie Trail and Clark Avenue, in Raleigh***
Time: ***7:30pm. Folks start showing up a bit before 7 to chat, brag and eat donuts.***

VE Testing: The RARS VEs will accept walk-in testing at the February, May, August and November RARS meetings, at the RARSfest in April, the Cary Swapfest in July and the JARSfest in November, and following RARS license classes. Please bring a photo ID, the original and a copy of your current license, plus any CSCEs you have for credit. Please refer to www.rars.org for more information.

TECHNICAL & TRADERS NET– Saturday evenings on 146.64 after the 8:00pm RARS net

Announcements

NEXT RARS MEETING:
Tuesday, April 5, 2005 7:30 pm
Program: Emergency Planning by Dr. Conder

RARSFEST STAFF			RARS Table	Max Bloodworth	KO4TV
Chairman	Hank Montgomery	K4HM	Security	Ron Ford	W4RJF
Co-Chair	Tim Nicholson	W4NOT	Setup	Bernard Blackmon	W4BRB
RARSFEST Treasurer	Greg Seamster	KE4PAX	RARSFEST Social	-Mary Jo Littlewood	K4MJL
Admissions	Jim Walter	K4FIJ	Stage	Gary Pearce	KN4AQ
Contests	Dick Bitner	W8HYD	Talk-In	Bruce Buck	KC4UQN
Dealers	Chuck Littlewood	K4HF	Teardown	Dave Thomas	K4SAN
Flea market	Jeff Wittich	AC4ZO	Test Table	Frank Scaraglino	KA2FWC
Meetings	Chuck. Littlewood	K4HF	Exam Team	Joe White	WA4GIR
RARS Table	Larry Holt	KG4FIQ	Exam Team	Liz White	KO4CK

RARSFEST SOCIAL April 16, 7:00pm at the Jim Graham Building, State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, NC. Please bring a covered dish for everyone to enjoy.

RARSFEST April 17, 8:00-3:30 at Jim Graham Building, State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, NC

MOTORCYLE CHARITY RIDE Cary to Sanford on Sunday May 15. Need 4-5 hams for 4 hours, over by approximately 11am

FIRECRACKER 50/100K Cary, NC Monday July 4th. Need 12 hams for 7 hours, over by approximately 2PM

MS-150 Sat-Sun September 10-11. Need 40 hams for both days. Please make your motel reservations NOW. Check website for accommodations, http://nationalmssociety.org/nct/home/

RARS DINNER

Come join us on the **2nd** Tuesday of each month. We are currently meeting in the private dining room at the Golden Corral, 6129 Glenwood Avenue. People start arriving around 6:30 P.M., and things usually wind down by 8 P.M. or so. You can come whenever it's convenient for you. This gathering is open to anyone, RARS and non-RARS members, adults and children alike. Hope to see you there.

HAMFEST CALENDAR

April 9	Chesapeake, VA
April 16	Morganton, NC
April 17th	**Raleigh, NC--RARSFEST**
May 20-22	**Dayton, OH**
May 21	Williamston, NC
May 28*	Durham, NC
June 11	Winston-Salem, NC
June 25-26	**FIELD DAY**
July 2	Salisbury, NC
July 16	**Cary, NC**
July 23	Waynesville, NC

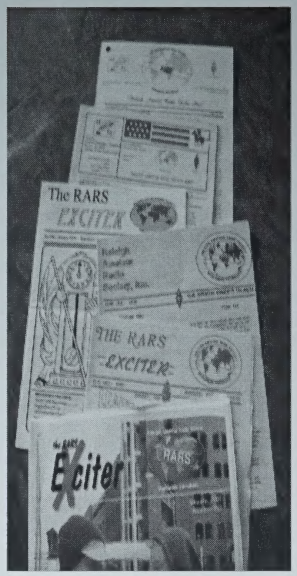
Courtesy of the SERA Repeater Journal
*Date is not confirmed

LOOKing Back 30 Years

Taken from the April 1975 Exciter

Hamfest held at the Crabtree Valley Mall on US70 in Raleigh. A total of 90 people attended.

The FCC put on a demonstration of various exhibits at the Hi-Fi show in February which included: a tape recorder, a record player, a standard broadcast receiver, and a color TV receiver which interfered with the tape recorder, record player and broadcast receiver. Other items shown were a fluorescent light, which interfered with the broadcast receiver. A light dimmer, which interfered with the broadcast receiver. An oscillator radiation, an electric shaver an ignition spark plug discharge which all interfered with the TV receiver. *Excerpts from the "Auto-Call", March, 1975



LOOKing Back 10 Years

Taken from the April 1995 Exciter

The RARS 224.64 repeater is finally back on the air. And it's on from the "Bayleaf" tower site, right next to the 146.64 and 444.525 repeaters. There are two other 200 machines in the area. To the west, the Hillsborough repeater on 224.26 has similar coverage to the 147.225 machine. To the east, a repeater near Wendell is on 224.80. A little further out of town, there are wide-coverage machines on 224.22 in Rocky Mount, 224.72 in Trenton, and 224.84 in Grifton.

Piedmont Coastal Repeater Network (PCRN)

146.88, 145.39, 147.105, & 147.135 Are supported by donations to PCRN. If you would like to donate, please make checks to:

PCRN
PO Box 12734
Raleigh, NC 27605

NET REPORTS FOR MARCH 2005

8:00pm DAILY: RARS Evening Net

Participants 450
Traffic 38/35
Time 743 minutes
Sessions 28

8:30pm SAT: Tech & Traders Net
9:00pm MON: SWL/SIG

Participants 56
Traffic 0/0
Time 368 Minutes
Sessions 7

APRIL MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Roger	KE4FE	04/02
Robert	KG4VK	04/03
Jim	KE3N	04/07
Ginger	KD4OK	04/08
Larry	Carringer	04/09
Martin	KI4CFS	04/13
John	KD4OL	04/17
Jim	KB4BZ	04/12
Joe	WA2UZ	04/22
Neal	N4HAF	04/23
Dave	KG4OPZ	04/24
Jeffrey	KG4NUN	04/25
Don	WA4AVU	04/26

RARS Board Meeting
January 2005

The Board of Directors meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was conducted on January 18, 2005 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church located on Dixie Trail.

President Andy Peterson, NI4S, called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Officers' Reports

Greg KE4PAX provided the Treasurer's Report. There are currently 248 club members.

Dick W8HYD provided the Vice President's report.

- He needs to talk with Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO to check on the possibility of using the new RTP Nortel training site to conduct the next technician class. When the location is secured, information on the class will be made available for announcements and inclusion in the Exciter.
- Good comments have been received for the presentation given by John Van Pelt, K4JVP, during the January general meeting.

Committee Reports

FM Committee – Gary KN4AQ reported on discussions with Danny Musten KD4RAA on possibly adding Echo link to the 145.13 repeater. There was also mention of a 2-meter antenna location available in RTP (at the Erricson UHF site) and the possibility of moving the 13 repeater to RTP. This might aid in coverage for public service events in that area. A discussion of the current RARS repeater equipment and usages followed.

Exciter – Denyse K4DAW reported the February Exciter went out on the 13th of this month. Greg KE4PAX advised the cost of preparing and mailing the newsletter has increased by $80 per month. A discussion of exploring the pricing of other printers for the Exciter followed. Hank K4HM will investigate printing costs with the printer being used for the hamfest flyers.

Net Manager – Mary Holtschneider, KG4OQA, reported via email that the nets are going well. She encourages anyone interested in serving as a net control operator to contact her at kg4oqa@excite.com.

Webmaster – no report.

Membership Services – Denyse K4DAW reported that she wants to work on getting younger hams involved with the club and local radio activities. Discussion followed with many ideas on recruiting youngsters to the hobby. In the end, it was agreed that our club needs to work harder to address the issue of introducing young people to amateur radio and maintaining their interest in our hobby.

Hamfest – Hank K4HM reminded members that Communications Headquarters is no longer in business and this leaves a big hole in our vendor area. The group discussed ideas for filling this void. Hamfest flyers are about to go to the printer and can be folded for $65 which will save manpower. They will still need to be tabbed and labeled. A party to handle this job will be scheduled when the flyers are available. Online ordering and volunteer sign up is about ready for the club's webpage. .

Field Day - no report.

Public Information – Gary KN4AQ advised that an article he has written about local ham participation in the Governor's inauguration is available on the ARRL website.

Education – Dick W8HYD reported there has been some thought of starting a kit building project for some of our future meetings.

VE Team – no report. It was mentioned that testing rates increased at the beginning of the year.

Public Service – Bob K1RCB (acting chairperson) reported that the Odyssey of the Mind Tournament is coming up on March 5. Dick KD4ISC is coordinating that event Future events include an MS walk in April and the MS 150 in September. Greg KE4PAX advised that members of CERT training are being added to the Exciter mailing list. Bob advised that RARS is being used to assist the City of Raleigh in taking advantage of grant money available for CERT training. The issue was discussed prior to the Board meeting with Greg KE4PAX, a CPA and Dick W8HYD. Further discussion was tabled until the new business section of the meeting occurred.

ARRL Liaison – Chuck K4HF reported there has been no word on proposal changes from the FCC. The ARRL has restarted their club commission program for recruiting new or renewing league members. The process is complicated and will not be pursued by RARS at present time.

W4DW / W4RNC Trustee – no report. It was announced that Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO, opened his shack and hosted local operators for the NA QSO party this past weekend.

At-Large Directors – no report.

New Business

Greg KE4PAX reported that $700 of the $2000 budgeted for grants and donations had been spent. He asked for ideas for the use of the remaining funds. A donation to the ARRL Spectrum Defense fund was discussed. Gary KN4AQ made a motion to donate $300 to the Spectrum Defense fund. A second was provided by Chuck K4HF and the vote carried in favor of the motion.

Chuck K4HF advised that we need to remind the membership that there are funds available for projects and donations. They should be encouraged to present ideas to the Board for consideration.

General Comments

Hank K4HM suggested that members be reminded of the APRS radio units that can be borrowed from the club. This might help those who don't have equipment and improve APRS participation.

Dick KD4ISC would like to see the public service points updated on the webpage or eliminated. Bob K1RCB advised he would handle any public service points updates.

On a motion by Selene KG4RMT and unanimous second, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35pm.

Submitted by Dick Orander, KD4ISC, Secretary

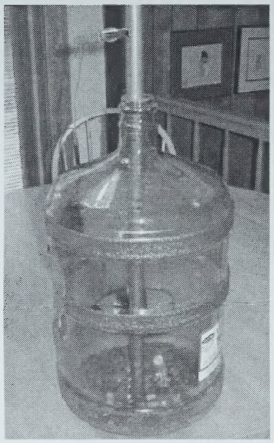
A Portable Ground For Just Pennies

I'm one of those folks with a second story shack. I've long pondered various solutions for providing a good RF ground for my equipment. An outside ground rod won't work since my shack is over the front porch. Counterpoises are messy. There's also the XYL factor.

While fooling around in a storage area I discovered quite a few boxes of pennies I had been collecting over the years (they don't call me KD4 I Save Cents for nothing). I began to wonder … pennies and ground rods are copper (or at least copper clad) … perhaps my penny collection could be used as a portable RF ground.

A penny made in 1982 and later is 97.5% Zinc and 2.5% Copper. Both elements are good electrical conductors. It takes about 18 pennies stacked to equal an inch. An 8 foot ground rod could theoretically be replaced with 1728 pennies. I had plenty of pennies but wanted to avoid the 8 foot length. Perhaps containing a large quantity of the cents in a hefty container would allow for plenty of surface contact and just might work.

I took a short piece of copper pipe and centered it in a plastic 5 gallon water jug that I had lying around. The pipe stuck out above the mouth of the jug for easy access (see picture).



Here is my "Portable Ground."

Note that only a few pennies are shown in this picture to allow for a view of the copper pipe contact assembly.

The water jug that I used was a five gallon unit made of thick plastic. A heavy gauge is needed due to the weight of the pennies when the container is full.

After filling the jug with pennies, I fastened a clamp to the rod which was then connected by wire to my radio and tuner. A quick check with an Ohm meter showed a good reading. I fired up my equipment and was pleased with the results. The RF feedback that I had noted on 20m and 40m were gone. The tuning range of my dipole was improved and acceptable SWR was achieved down into the CW area of the bands. The occasional interference my wife had noted on the VCR had also vanished. Eureka!

While grounding improvements were noted, there are a few drawbacks. The portable side of my solution is questionable. While it works for a second story shack, I wouldn't want to lug it around. A full "ground jug" weighs about 40 pounds. Perhaps it could double as an anchor for a portable mast during field day operations. The effect of using fewer pennies will require some experimentation, perhaps in the near future. I've got to store my penny collection somewhere so it may as well be in my grounding system.

The true test of the usefulness of my new portable RF ground will be shown with continued operation. Remember to observe all electrical and RF safety rules and check your local electrical code for the safe use of pennies as grounding materials. I plan to put this project through its paces on the April 1 'LOOF LIRPA' contest. We'll see how it goes. Wish me luck and I hope to work you during the event.

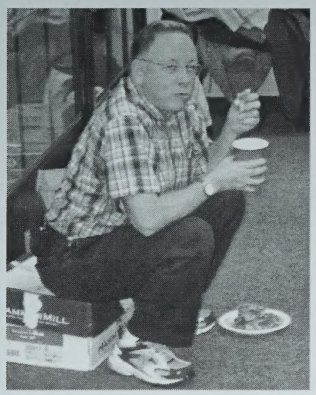
73 and good DX,

Dick KD4ISC

RARSFEST LABELING PARTY

Rarsfest will be April 17, 2005 with the social dinner on April 16. Members of RARS got together to prepare 13,000 flyers for mailing. It's very costly to have the flyers commercially tabbed and labeled so to save some money and have fellowship at the same time, a tabbing and labeling party was held on Wednesday, February 16.

Photos by Denyse K4DAW



Chuck K4HF eats pizza before facing the work ahead

Getting ready for the tabbing and labeling of the RARSFEST flyers

RARS BEGINNINGS

I was saddened to hear of Bob Corn's passing and read with great interest his Silent Key column in the January RARS Exciter. Bob's log of the early days of RARS sure brought back some fond memories for me. I was one of the original founders of RARS and was involved in those early planning discussions. One story involves how RARS got its name. As I recall, it went something like this:

When the subject of club name arose, some felt that Brentwood Amateur Radio Club was appropriate since so many of us lived in Brentwood. Then it was suggested that we call it the North Raleigh Amateur Radio Club, to include Stu Meyer W2GHK/4 over in Eastgate. That quickly got changed to the Raleigh Amateur Radio Club to include Bob Corns K4MC, who lived in central Raleigh.

Then someone suggested Wake County ARC so we wouldn't leave out any potential members. In short order, it became the Central North Carolina ARC, North Carolina ARC, East Coast ARC, United States ARC, North American ARC (we were an ambitious bunch after all), Worldwide ARC and finally Milky Way ARC! We finally compromised ...and the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was born!

It was so much fun in those early years of RARS with all the conventions and other activities going on. Of course, the work was made easy with all the fine members we had. I was the original Nametag Chairman (I still have mine -- complete with thumbtacks glued to the back). I had to move to Virginia in 1974 (where I later helped form the Southside VA ARC) but I still followed RARS' activities and accomplishments with much pride. Since returning to NC in 1984, I haven't been very active (but I do keep my ticket current). I still look forward to my 'old friends weekend' at the RARS Hamfest every April. Hope to see you there.

73,
John Fried
W4WWD

RARS General Meeting for March 2005

The general meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was conducted on March 1, 2005 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church located on Dixie Trail. Members gathered and enjoyed RARS birthday cake, ice cream and refreshments prior to the official start of the meeting.

Vice President Dick Bitner, W8HYD, called the meeting to order at 7: 39 pm.

Michael Thurman, KB7NLA, Richard Stearns, KB1HIW and Nancy Stearns, KB1HIX were welcomed as guests to the meeting.

Treasurer's Report:

Greg Seamster, KE4PAX, provided the Treasurer's report and advised there were 255 RARS members. He also reported that a donation had been made to the Handi Hams organization. Greg invited anyone with questions about membership or the Treasurer's report to stop by and see him.

The following announcements were made:

- Dick W8HYD reported that the next Tech classes will be announced when the final paperwork with Nortel is completed. The RTP Nortel facility will be used as the next class location. Let Dick know of your interest in future classes.
- Bruce Buck, KC4UQN, is trying to locate the extension cord he loaned to the club during the February meeting.
- Bernard Blackmon, W4BRB, reported that the Red Cross is looking for continued support of radio operators for the State Fair and thanked Bob Breyer, K1RCB, for last year's coordination work.
- Bob Breyer, K1RCB, announced the following public service opportunities – MS Walk in RTP on April 9, MS-150 in New Bern on September 10 – 11 (make your hotel reservations now), a motorcycle charity ride on May 15 and the July 4 Firecracker bike ride. CERT training is also available on March 11, 12 and 13. Contact Bob at K1RCB@arrl.net to volunteer or receive more information.
- Dick Orander, KD4ISC, presented a NTS traffic training completion certificate to James Allen, KG4ISM. Dick then announced that he needed a few more hams to assist with the March 5 Odyssey of the Mind. Anyone interested in helping out should see Dick after the meeting or contact him at KD4ISC@arrl.net.
- Dick W8HYD, announced the beginning of the new RARS HF Challenge. Details will be discussed at the next meeting and in the next Exciter. The Challenge is an internal contest and a way to promote some friendly competition and radioactivity among the membership.
- A new 6 meter net will be started on the K4ITL 53.03 MHz repeater on Thursday nights at 8:30 pm.
- Hank Montgomery, K4HM, discussed the 33rd annual RARSfest that will be held on April 17 this year. Our fest will be the ARRL NC Section Convention. Everyone is encouraged to participate with one or more of the event committees. This year, the incentive prize (which is awarded to one of the RARSfest volunteers) is being replaced with a worker's party. All volunteers will be invited to participate. The club's website has also been updated to allow for volunteers to sign up for hamfest duties online.

Program:

Dick W8HYD announced that RARS was 36 years old this year. He read portions of an email he had received from Bob Workman, WA4ZZN, who provided an insight on the club's founding fathers and early club activity.

Dick then presented plaques to the following club members

- Virginia Enzor, NC4VA, in appreciation for her work as club Secretary.
- Hank Montgomery, K4HM, in appreciation for his continuing work as Hamfest Chairman.

(Continued on page 10)

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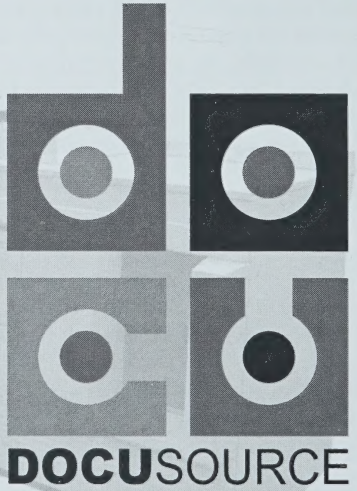

relax; **docu**source it.

33rd Annual RARSfest - April 17, 2005

By Hank Montgomery K4HM, Chairman

RARSFEST NEEDS YOU. As a RARS member, you can be proud that RARS has a great hamfest. Our vendors and guests tell us so every year. The hard work and support of our membership is what makes it great. Because of your dedication RARSfest is the largest hamfest in the northern Piedmont area.

RARSFest planning meetings started back in September, just 5 months after the RARSFest 2004. By now thirteen thousand flyers have been mailed, more have been handed out at hamfests, club meetings, and area retail outlets. Ads have been placed in local papers and on web sites, hamfest calendars have been updated, notice has been sent on email lists, and announcements have been made on nets across the state. Admission tickets have been sold through online registration on our web site, through snail mail, and at other club meetings and hamfests, and Jeff Wittich AC4ZO has managed to keep up with the sales of pre-registration tickets, flea market space and booths. Contracts are in place for the Graham building, tables, chairs, booths, curtains, etc. Prizes have been ordered, floor layouts have been confirmed, the menu for the Saturday night social has been determined, workers have been recruited, and on and on .....

But there is still work to be done and I invite you to get involved. Please help make RARSfest a success. You'll be richer for the experience. Go to the hamfest page from the RARS website or go directly to (http://www.rars.org/hamfest) and read about the hamfest. Then go to the very bottom of the page and click on "RARSFest Volunteer Workers Sign Up Here." Or contact me, or anyone on the RARSfest committee using the links from the volunteer or staff pages. There is still plenty of work to go around for everyone, and luckily RARS is a big club with enough members to get the job done. We have ample opportunities available in Security, Admissions, Setup, Flea Market, Social, Talk-in, Stage help, Contests, Raffle ticket sales, RARS Table (which offers the free service of selling equipment for members who are working) and Teardown (Dumpster Divers). We even have Doug and Doug - who live in other states but drive for hours each year to work the whole weekend at RARSfest. Please volunteer a few hours of your time to support RARS and help us make the 2005 RARSfest a resounding success.

The weekend activities get started on Friday when Bernard W4BRB checks out the building where the Fairgrounds staff has already set up some of the tables. Bernard's setup crew will spend several hours on Friday afternoon finishing the job so everything is ready for the Saturday onslaught of dealers.

On Saturday morning the setup crew is again in full swing making last minute adjustments. By noon the Flea Market crew headed by Jeff Wittich and the Admissions crew headed by Jim Walter K4FIJ are busy handling the arrival of vehicles full of goodies for the flea market and the commercial dealer booths managed by Chuck Littlewood K4HF. About now Gary Pearce AC4ZO is preparing the Stage while Mary Jo Littlewood K4MJL and her Social crew are busy converting the meeting room into a dining room. We have Fairgrounds Security on the floor to take care of any unfriendly business but Chief Ron Ford W4RJFmanages our friendly RARSfest Security crew as they stay busy directing folks who can't find their table, the restrooms, the door, etc., making sure vehicles are not left blocking the isles, and keeping an eye on things in general (of course there is a lot of window shopping going on as well). A little later club members start arriving with covered dishes to go with the social Mary Jo has provided and the line starts forming for the supper bell (Yes! Larry Carringer will be back tickling the ivories again this year). After supper it's time to vacate the premises except for Fairgrounds Security who will maintain a presence inside the building overnight.

Then bright and early Sunday morning at about 5:30 am the first workers start arriving. There will already be a line of flea market vendors waiting for the doors to open so they can set up their tables and booths. The Talk-in station headed by Bruce Buck KC4UQN will be guiding our guests in from the four corners of the state while the Admissions crew is again busy at the flea market door. Security is keeping things calm while Larry Holt KG4FIQ and Max Bloodworth KO4TV are collecting boat anchors and arranging them on the RARS member sales table. Frank Scaraglino KA2FWC will be setting up a Test Station next to the RARS table where he will help our guests check out equipment they want to buy, the final touches are being put on the stage, and the setup crew is resetting tables that were used for the supper the night before.

At 7:00 the Security crews start gently reminding the vendors that it's time to get all vehicles out of the building so we can open the doors, and at 7:30 the Admissions crew starts selling admission tickets from a booth outside the front of the building. Then at 8:00 am we open the floodgates and the mob rushes in. Chuck Littlewood keeps the Forums and meetings going, and meanwhile Gary Pearce manages the stage through prize drawings, announcements, paging service, information booth, and serves as a general focal point for our guests.

By mid-morning the hamfest is in full swing. The VE team headed by Joe and Liz White WA4GIR and KO4CK respectively, have opened the doors to the Amateur Radio Exams, the meetings and forums are getting started, DX aficionado Bill McDowell K4CIA, and ARRL DXCC Branch Manager Bill Moore NC1L are checking QSL cards, and you might hear some beeps coming from the contest area - it may even be recognized as Morse Code. If you head over to watch you will find Dick Bitner W4HYD conducting some contests for Homebrew, QLF, and QBH

At 3:00 pm we have the drawing for the major prize (an ICOM 706 MK-IIG HF/VHF/UHF radio) after which the crowd rapidly thins out. At 3:30 pm we announce that RARSfest 2005 is now over and invite all to return for RARSfest 2006.

The building is now the realm of Dumpster Divers as Dave Thomas K4SAN and his crew help pack up the RARS equipment that has been used for the hamfest so it can be stored away for next year, clean up the boat anchors left behind, and help the vendors pack up and leave. All that remains at that point are the after-parties as a lot of tired workers gather at various local restaurants for a relaxing meal and swap hamfest stories.

(General Meeting Continued from page 9)

Certificates of appreciation were presented to:

- Bob Breyer K1RCB, Marian Breyer K1MRB, Bob Conder K4RLC, Bob Woodson WX4MMM, Mike George KC4WUH, Bill McDowell K4CIA, Vianne Pendleton, Frank Scaraglino KA2FWC, Bob Scott KG4IZA, Woody Winstead KJ4SO, Selene Montgomery KG4RMT, Doug Sweet AD4UL, Dwight K4YNY and Shirley N4LFV Peay, Ray WA4OMM and Kathleen KB4HWC Thomas, Carol WB4DZK and Jesse WB4PPW Knight.

Dick then thanked everyone for their presence, effort and support of the club.

Late announcements:

David Crawford, KF4VXJ and Logistics AEC for ARES, announced that Bob Conder, K4RLC, would be providing a training session on the Geo-hazards of the Carolinas on March 8 at 7:30pm. This session can be heard on 146.88 and the Tar-heel Emergency net. A Power Point presentation that goes along with the training can be downloaded from N4TAB.com. David then reported that ARES had been contacted by 'certain governmental agencies' concerning an activation about 'you know what'. Your participation is appreciated. There may be another practice activation in the near future. This coming Thursday's ARES net will include a simplex test.

Door Prizes were won by Dennis Mason, K4DAM and Michael Thurman, KB7NLA.

Attendance - 47

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Dick Orander
RARS Secretary

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The Central Carolina Skywarn Net Meets Tuesdays at 9:15 pm on 146.88 Repeater

www.ccskywarn.net

SKYWARN

NEWS

SKYWARN DINNER

Thursday March 24, at 6:30pm, at the Golden Corral in Raleigh on Glenwood Avenue. Subject: Spring severe storms.

VOIPWX HURRICANE NET SETS RECORD FOR CHECK-INS

The Echolink/IRLP Net set a record for check-ins on Saturday night February 19, 2005. A total of 51 from around the world checked in with locations and weather. A presentation about the winter weather, describing hurricane force winds and 30 inches of snow, was given by Rob KD1CY in Massachusetts . Please join us every Saturday night at 7:00pm on 146.775 (PL 82.5) or on echolink node 7203. The website for is www.echolink.com.

Danny KD4RAA spoke at the skywarn dinner on IRLP/ Echolink, and how to help the National Hurricane Center during hurricane season.

Chuck K4HF, Mary Jo K4MJL, Denyse K4DAW, and Jim K4FIJ with HT's in hand on the bridge of the cruise ship *"Star Princess"* somewhere in the Western Caribbean. There was no severe weather during the week.

Skywarn dinner on February 24, 2005.

The RARS
Exciter
April 2005

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HAM ACTIVITIES

RARS members tabbing and labeling 13,000 RARSFEST flyers on February 16th, 2005. (Story on p.7)

Mother and Daughter radio team for Odyssey of the Mind. Virginia NC4VA and Courtney KI4HOS (This was Courtney's first public service event).